

Message Text

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47

ACTION ORM-02

INFO OCT-01 AF-08 NEA-10 IO-13 ISO-00 PM-04 NSC-05 SP-02

SS-15 CIAE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 DHA-02 DODE-00 /069 W

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R 111200Z SEP 76

FM AMEMBASSY RABAT

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9758

INFO AMEMBASSY ALGIERS

AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT

USMISSION USUN

USMISSION GENEVA

C O N F I D E N T I A L RABAT 4939

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: SREF, UNHCR, MO, SS, AG

SUBJECT: UN HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR REFUGEES TO VISIT

REF: RABAT 4046

1. SEMI OFFICIAL PRESS ANNOUNCED SEPTEMBER 10 THAT PRINCE SADRUDDIN AGHA KHAN WOULD ARRIVE IN RABAT SEPTEMBER 12 FOR AN "OFFICIAL VISIT". THE VISIT WOULD BE WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK OF SEEKING WAYS TO PERMIT THE RETURN OF "MOROCCAN CITIZENS" BEING "HELD" IN TINDOUF BY ALGERIAN AUTHORITIES. THE PRESS ACCOUNT RECALLED THE JOINT MOROCCAN-MAURITANIAN APPEAL (REFTEL) MADE TO THE REFUGEES IN JULY AT THE END OF THE HASSAN-OULD DADDAH SUMMIT URGING THEIR RETURN, AND IT REVIEWED THE SUBSEQUENT EXCHANGES OF CORRESPONDENCE BETWEEN GOM OFFICIALS AND SUCH ORGANIZATIONS AS LICROSS, ICRC, AND UNHCR SEEKING THE AID OF THOSE LATTER IN THE RETURN OF THE REFUGEES (ALL HAD CAUTIOUSLY ASSENTED TO HELP, PROVIDED THE REFUGEES WERE WILLING TO RETURN).

2. SENIOR UNDP REP TOLD AMBASSADOR SEPTEMBER 11 THAT HE WAS UNINFORMED AS TO SADRUDDIN'S SPECIFIC PLANS, BUT THAT THE PRINCE WOULD BE SEEING THE KING IMMEDIATELY AFTER HIS ARRIVAL. THIS, INCIDENTALLY, WOULD BE THE KING'S FIRST WORKING AUDIENCE
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TO OUR KNOWLEDGE WITH A FOREIGNER SINCE HIS MINOR SURGERY TWO

WEEKS AGO. THE UN OFFICIAL DID NOT KNOW WHETHER THE PRINCE
WOULD SUBSEQUENTLY VISIT ALGERIA.

3. COMMENT: THE GOM IS CONTINUING TO LAY THE GROUNDWORK
FOR ITS REFUGEE-ORIENTED PROPAGANDA CAMPAIGN, PROBABLY
KEYED IN LARGE MEASURE TO THE UPCOMING UNGA SESSION. MANY
QUESTIONS ARE POSED BY THIS CAMPAIGN. THE MOST PERTINENT
ARE WHETHER THE ALGERIANS WOULD PERMIT A GENUINE
POLLING OF THE REFUGEES TO DETERMINE THEIR WISHES, AND WHETHER,
IF SUCH A POLLING WERE TO OCCUR, THE REFUGEES WOULD ACTUALLY
OPT TO RETURN TO THE SAHARA. ALL OF THIS COULD ALSO FIGURE IN THE
GOM'S ANNOUNCED PLANS TO HOLD LOCAL ELECTIONS IN THE SAHARA
AFTER RAMADAN, AND COULD CONCEIVABLY CAUSE THE POSTPONEMENT
SUCH ELECTIONS. FINALLY, WE NOTE FOR THE RECORD THAT
THE ISSUE OF "MOROCCAN CITIZENS" BEING HELD AGAINST THEIR WISHES
INSIDE ALGERIA COULD EVENTUALLY SERVE AS A JUSTIFICATION
FOR MILITARY MEASURES TO "RESCUE" THEM.
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